I/We claim:

1. A system for presenting a GIS, comprising:

   (A) a database containing map data and related data, said related data linked to said map data;

   (B) a server computer running GIS software for presenting the map data and the related data, said server having access to data in said database, and connected to the Internet;

   (C) means for updating said related data.

2. The system of Claim 1, wherein said map data pertains to a political unit and said related data pertains to governmental functions conducted by said political unit.

3. The system of Claim 3, wherein said political unit is in the nature of a municipality and said governmental functions include public service, public works, taxing and police power.

4. The system of Claim 3, wherein said governmental functions utilize forms for obtaining, storing and reporting data, said related data including data derived from said forms.

5. The system of Claim 4, wherein said means for updating includes computer processing apparatus and software for converting faxed forms into said related data having a digital value corresponding to an actual value.

6. The system of Claim 5, wherein said computer processing apparatus includes first means for converting a faxed form into an image file and second means for extracting said related data from said image file.

7. The system of Claim 6, wherein said second means for extracting include means for recognizing data fields in said image file and means for converting the data fields into digital values by at least one of optical character recognition and intelligent character recognition.

8. The system of Claim 7, wherein said means for updating include a fax machine from which a form bearing written data is sent as faxed data and a fax receiver that receives and converts the fax data into said image file

9. The system of Claim 8, wherein said image file is in at least one of tiff, jpg, png, pdf and gif formats.

10. The system of Claim 9, further including visual comparison means for presenting the image file and the data values derived therefrom to a human receiver to allow verification that the data was converted correctly.

11. The system of Claim 10, further including a data server for serving said database to said server computer for transmission of the related data over the Internet.

12. The system of Claim 1, wherein said related data in said database is subject to searching based upon search terms.

13. The system of Claim 12, wherein the searching conducted may combine search terms for a plurality of data fields.

14. The system of Claim 12, wherein said related data is displayable in text or map form.

15. The system of Claim 15 wherein said related data pertaining to a parcel of property can be accessed by selecting the parcel from the graphical map interface or by selecting a municipal department having responsibility for processing forms containing said related data sought.

16. A method for developing a GIS, comprising the steps of:

(A) providing a database structure for containing map data and related data linked to said map data;

(B) providing a server computer running GIS software for presenting the map data and the related data, said server computer having access to data in said database, and connected to the Internet;

(C) creating at least one map of a geographic area and storing it in the database;

(D) storing related data associated with the geographical area depicted in the at least one map in the database;

(E) linking the map to the associated data;

(F) providing the GIS to users over the Internet;

(G) charging fees to the users of municipal services for data change transactions that effect the related data in the database.

17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the database structure, the server computer and the GIS is owned by a system owner and the data change transactions are associated with municipal transactions between a municipality and an entity seeking municipal services, said entity paying a fee to the municipality in response to said step of charging.

18. The method of Claim 17, wherein the data change transaction includes the submission of change data by the entity to the municipality.

19. The method of Claim 18, wherein the change data is presented on a written form.

20. The method of Claim 19, wherein the written form is selected from the group consisting of building applications, building subcode, certificate applications, certificates, inspection schedules, inspection scheduling, rental inspection, rental testing, rental unit registration, UCCARS submission, Uniform Construction Code submission, oil spill forms, septic system forms, well permits, planning board applications, Planning/Zoning inspection scheduling, site plan applications, subdivision applications, violations/ complaints, zoning board applications, zoning permits, zoning tracking, dog licenses, accident reports, crime data, refuse pickup, tax information, application denial, application for appeal, application for zoning

permit, plan review, fire inspections, rental unit updates, document bundles, pocket PC inspections, DARM/OPRA, street opening permits, and utility work orders.

21. The method of Claim 17, further comprising the step of the municipality paying a fee to the system owner for data change transactions.

22. The method of Claim 17, further comprising the step of an engineer purchasing a license from the system owner to use the GIS.

23. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of the engineer introducing the GIS to the municipality.

24. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of the engineer teaching the municipality to use the GIS.

25. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of the engineer offering use of the GIS to the municipality free of charge, except for the payment of fees associated with data change transactions.

26. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of the engineer making maps for incorporation into the GIS.

27. The method of Claim 26, further comprising the step of the system owner receiving the maps made by the engineer and paying the engineer a map-making fee.

28. The method of Claim 27, further comprising the step of the engineer preparing updates for the maps provided.

29. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of the system owner modifying the database to accommodate new types of related data associated with new forms serviced by the GIS after the step of providing a database structure.

30. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of the system owner licensing the municipality to use the database.

31. The system of Claim 6, wherein said means for updating including a digital sender for communicating related data into the database.

32. The system of Claim 10, further including digital comparison means for conducting a data parity check to allow verification that the data was converted correctly.

33. The system of Claim 10, further including means for grouping related image files into the batches to facilitate verification that the data was converted correctly.

34. The system of Claim 6, wherein said means for updating include means for communicating related data in the form of a previously scanned document into the database.

35. The system of Claim 1, wherein said means for updating said related data include a plurality of different means, at least one of which can be employed by a user without use of a computer.

36. The system of Claim 6, wherein said second means for extracting include means for recognizing data fields in said image file and means for converting the data fields into digital values by intelligent character recognition.

37. A method for developing a GIS, comprising the steps of:

(A) providing a database structure for containing map data and related data linked to said map data;

(B) providing a server computer running GIS software for presenting the map data and the related data, said server computer having access to data in said database, and connected to the Internet;

(C) creating at least one map of a geographic area and storing it in the database;

(D) storing related data associated with the geographical area depicted in the at least one map in the database;

(E) linking the map to the associated data;

(F) providing the GIS to users over the Internet;

(G) charging the users of the GIS for viewing data in the database.

38. The method of Claim 37, wherein the step of charging fees is triggered when data is viewed pursuant to a data change transaction.

39. The method of Claim 38, wherein the step of charging fees is conducted in advance of the data change transaction based upon an estimated volume of data change transactions.